

ISLAM

Experiencing the presence of God

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

One of the three astronauts who travelled in the Apollo 15 American spacecraft was Colonel James Irwin.

He later described the magic of that moment, in August 1972, when he set foot on the moon. It was an ecstatic experience, he said, to feel oneself in God's presence, to feel so close to Him that His greatness appeared before one's eyes.

Colonel Irwin did not look on his voyage to the moon as a voyage of mere scientific discovery; it had given him new spiritual life as well.

The moon was a new sight for Colonel Irwin. That is why, struck by its magnificence, he was able to experience there the presence of God.

Colonel Irwin's experience was not a unique one, for in truth all that God has created is so wonderful that one has only to gaze upon it to become lost in the wonders of what He has fashioned. The face of the Creator shines continually in the perfection of His creation.

In order to see God in His creation, we too have to look at every thing—not as old and familiar—but new and exciting; we have to look at things as if we are seeing them for the first time.

There is no greater discovery than the discovery of God, no greater realization than to feel Him everywhere.

When this realization is awakened, then everything becomes a reflection of His glory.

The sunshine will portray His light, the trees His beauty. One will feel His gentle touch in the winds as they caress one's body. As one prostrates oneself before Him, it will be as though one has cast oneself at His feet.

God is, indeed, everywhere, but only those who are blessed with vision can behold Him.